



INTERAGENCY CONNECTION

Chair's Corner



We intend to do even more in FY 2017, and are creating an Executive Policy Council to guide the Federal Executive Board!

The Executive Policy Council shall serve as a Board of Directors.

We intend that the

executive membership reflect the diversity of agencies in the Houston area. The goal is to have 10-14 FEB members, including the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

I want to publicly thank and introduce the following Executive Policy Council members. In addition to me, as Chair and Todd Consolini, FPS, as Vice Chair, members of the Council currently include:

- Joann Figueroa, OSHA
- Gloria Gibson, IRS
- David McQuiddy, EPA
- Gregory Motl, FAA
- Nicholas Papp, Department of State
- Dr. Edward Pringle, HUD
- Natalie Saiz, NASA

There is still room for 3-5 more executive members. If you are interested in serving on this Council or would like to provide input into the identification of future activities, I

welcome your involvement! Please contact me at timothy.jeffcoat@sba.gov.

We will hold our first meeting mid-November to identify the common needs of our federal community and launch a new project or two. From this effort, future Houston FEB activities and events will be coordinated to meet those needs.

In the meantime, we have activities planned for November and registration forms are provided in this newsletter:

FLRA workshop November 2nd (all day). The registration link is provided in the form on page 6.

How Money Works workshop November 3rd (3 hours). Register through the FEB office and the registration form is provided on page 7 of this newsletter.

Our FEB is gaining momentum and I want to thank you for your support. Contact me anytime at timothy.jeffcoat@sba.gov with ideas or suggestions for your FEB!

Tim Jeffcoat, Chairman

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HOW TO COMPLAIN LIKE A LEADER

Great leaders have burning complaints.

I wonder how many great endeavors began as great complaints? The United States of America, for example, began with great complaints.

We know the name Martin Luther King Jr. because he voiced his complaint like a leader.

3 ways to complain like a leader:

The difference between complaining like a leader and complaining like a loser is duration, focus, and orientation.

1. Discuss problems long enough to understand them.
2. Focus on solutions. ***You never build the life you want by getting lost in things you don't want.***
3. Orient language and behavior toward positives. Say what you want, even if you began with complaints.

Find positive expression to negative complaints. The bigger your complaint, the great the positive outcome you seek.

Purpose:

When you rule out complaining, you lose sight of your purpose.

Great complaints point to purpose. Have you noticed how some are deeply troubled by a problem and others don't care? Your great complaint explains who you are.

You lose yourself when you silence your

great complaint.

Achievement:

Great achievements are answers to great complaints.

When you rule out complaining, you accept the status quo.

The leaderly way to hear complaints:

If you're fortunate, you hear complaints. If

you don't hear complaints, you're out of the loop.

1. Encourage team members to explain their complaints.
2. Listen don't solve. When *you* solve a complainers

complaint, they complain about the solution.

3. Ask four questions when teammates complain.

- What's the good you want ***for others?*** Solving self-seeking complaints invites more complaints. (This idea is for leaders on your team, not customers.)
- What makes this important to you? Give leaders opportunity to explore motivations and connect with purpose.
- What would you like to do about this today? Always identify simple behaviors. Create forward movement, not perfect solutions.
- How can I help?

Taken from

<https://leadershipfreak.wordpress.com/2016/08/08/how-to-complain-like-a-leader/>



USE THESE 3 STRATEGIES TO MANAGE THE DIGITALLY DEPENDENT

Marty, recruits restaurant managers. Last January, he interviewed a candidate for possible positions. This past week, he wanted to connect with this individual about a particular opportunity. He sent the following message:

“We talked back in January. I need to connect with you about a new job in Allentown. When would be a good time to call today?”

The candidate’s reply?
“My phone currently has issues on calls. It’s very difficult to speak over the phone. I am available via e-mail though.”

In his exasperation, Marty sent me an e-mail explaining what happened and adding, “In your words, FIGURE IT OUT!!!! His phone has issues??? Can he borrow someone else’s phone? Maybe go to his mom’s house and use her rotary-dial phone? How about Morse code??”

One of the big deceptions of the past twenty years has been that digital technology would make our lives easier. Perhaps, but only in ways manipulated by those producing the software. As we have grown more dependent on choose endless options, we’ve also become more shallow thinkers. The result? Limited thinking that can stump many of us even with everyday challenges.

So how do you supervise those who limit their problem solving to the options on a smart phone? Try these three strategies:

Don’t rush to their rescue – Sure it’s easy to just give provide a solution. If you do, be prepared for an endless parade of similar issues. Simply saying, “You can figure this

out,” will compel many to do so. The others will require more perseverance. When you set an unspoken expectation that people think for themselves, they will.

Ask “what else?” – When someone says, “I don’t know what else to do,” ask “What else might work?” and then get quiet and wait. We all need a little push sometimes to think more innovatively. When the person in charge

places that responsibility on us, we will try harder. If the person suggests a solution that might work but could be better, ask “And what else?” Do this several times and they’ll get the message that there is a better solution out there and it’s *their* job to find it. When they do, a complimentary word will encourage them to try harder next time *without* your assistance.

Work the problem with them, but make sure they do the thinking – Say, “Let’s work on this together. Where should we begin?” Then wait and watch. Be patient, it might a few seconds for their creativity to ignite. As they work the problem, act as a facilitator. Resist the temptation to make suggestions. If you do, they will be tempted to adopt your solution and stop there. Silence is your ally here. It will compel them to think harder and that’s the unspoken point.

When those around you conclude that they need to think for themselves, they will discover that most of life’s solutions lie in their critical thinking, not on-line. Digital dependency can be cured. It just takes a bit of persistence.

Copied from <https://commonsenseenterprises.net/use-these-3-strategies-to-manage-the-digittally-dependent/>



Even a cell phone's presence impacts communication depth

Put your cell phone in your bag or in (not on) your desk for your next important conversation.



Researchers from England's Essex University write that a cell phone's nearby presence (not even checking it) lessens the depth of connection that takes place during conversation.

When a phone was nearby during important communication, study participants felt relationship quality was worse than participants without a cell phone present. The pairs also reported feeling less trust and thought that the one they were talking to was less empathetic.

As you meet with suppliers or employees for important matters, put your cell phone away for better relationship.

Taken from *Summit Solution Group* email summary. If you are interested in reading the entire article on the study, visit:

<http://spr.sagepub.com/content/30/3/237>

Don't escalate conflicts with these errors

Disagreements at work may be inevitable, but they don't have to destroy relationships between co-workers.

Disagreements at work may be inevitable, but they don't have to destroy relationships between co-workers. You'll resolve issues quickly and constructively if you avoid these common mistakes:

- **Absolutes.** Exaggeration is easy but dangerous: "You never get reports to me on time." Better: "Your last three reports have been late, and that's not acceptable."

- **Personal attacks.** In the emotion of the moment, we sometimes go after the speaker instead of the problem: "You obviously don't understand this topic at all." Attacks aren't very likely to lead to a meeting of minds. Better: "I understand your basic idea, but let me give you a little background about the situation."

- **Questioning motivations.** For example: "You're just in favor of restructuring because it means a bigger budget for your department." Stick to the facts so you don't alienate the other person. Better: "I don't mind your department growing, but it will limit our ability to innovate."

- **Defensiveness.** Being criticized makes many people lash back: "You're just jealous of my idea because you know I'm right," for example. This sounds as if you're the one who's jealous. Better: "I think you're wrong about my idea, and here are the reasons I think so."

- **Threats.** Anger can lead to unproductive threats: "If you don't watch it, I'll make sure nobody works with you again." The problem with threats is that you have to back them up, which can lead to ugly consequences. In addition, people will start avoiding you in general. Better: "Let's try to get past the emotion and solve the problem."

Reprinted from

<http://www.managebetter.biz/Main/Articles/30449.aspx>

COMPANIES CHOOSE UNQUALIFIED MANAGERS 82% OF THE TIME

Only one in ten people have the talent to manage. No wonder, according to Gallup, companies choose unqualified managers 82% of the time.

If you disagree with Gallup's findings, establish a criteria for effective management behaviors and survey your employees, anonymously of course.

It's the "and": The "and" in the following sentences makes management challenging.

1. Building relationships and delivering results.
2. Answering expectations from higher ups and treating people like humans rather than tools.
3. Getting things done today and reminding people of the big picture.
4. Giving support and challenge.
5. Having tough conversations and staying optimistic.
6. Innovating and establishing routines.
7. Listening to input and making decisions.
8. Prioritizing time and remaining flexible.
9. Expecting performance and developing people.
10. Providing negative feedback and affirming positive behaviors.

Managers often tell me they're frustrated and feel unsupported.

Dealing with the "and":

The #1 behavior of the most effective managers at Google is coaching.

Dipping your toe in the coaching stream:



1. Stand beside and with people both figuratively and literally.
2. Say what you see without judging it.
 - a. I noticed your energy dip. What's happening for you?
 - b. That's not working for you.

What new behavior would you like to try?

- c. How is that getting you where you want to go? (Use this question both to affirm and confront.)
3. Challenge people to give their best.
 - a. How might you bring your best to this project?
 - b. What behaviors align best with your highest aspirations?
 - c. How will you know you're succeeding?
 4. Silence your inner fixer for a moment or two. Provide space for individuals to solve their own problems and seize their own opportunities. (This is the coaching-manager's greatest challenge and opportunity. If you do nothing else, do this.)
 5. Practice forward-facing curiosity. Briefly explore what went wrong. Quickly move to, "How might you step toward your goal?"

Taken from
<https://leadershipfreak.wordpress.com/2016/09/07/companies-choose-unqualified-managers-82-of-the-time/>



Houston Federal Executive Board And the Federal Labor Relations Authority

Training on the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute

Date:	Wednesday, November 2, 2016
Time:	8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Location:	Leland Building, 1 st Floor Conference Room 1919 Smith Street, Houston, OK
Offered by:	Federal Labor Relations Authority, Office of the General Counsel Dallas Regional Office

What will this training cover?

This course offers a broad overview of federal-sector labor law. Topics include: the duty to bargain in good faith, including the *de minimis* and "covered by" doctrines, and substantive versus impact and implementation bargaining; meetings, including formal discussions, bypasses, and investigatory examinations (or Weingarten meetings); interference with statutory rights and discrimination based on protected activity; bars to filing ULP charges, such as timeliness and prior grievances; and information requests.

Who should attend this training?

Union representatives – officers and stewards – and agency representatives – from first-line supervisor to agency head. If you are involved in labor-relations at your agency, this training will provide an overview of your rights and responsibilities under the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute.

How do I sign up?

Room capacity is 75; when registrations reach 75, this event will be closed.






Go to the FLRA website and sign up here:

<https://www.flra.gov/resources-training/training/upcoming-flra-training>



Houston FEB presents: Financial Wellness Workshop



Date:	Thursday, November 3, 2016
Time:	9:00 a.m.- Noon
Location:	Alliance Tower 12 th Floor Room 1250-1, 8701 S. Gessner Road Houston, TX 77074
Why?	With Federal salaries not keeping up with the cost of living, it is more important than ever for federal employees to be equipped with information on how to maximize their incomes.
Topics:	<div>  <p>How Money Works – basic fundamentals you were definitely never meant to “know”</p> </div> <div> <p>Debt Solutions – alleviate unnecessary stress of too much month and not enough money</p>  </div> <div>  <p>Software & Apps – tools to assist you in tracking expenditures, calculate interest on loans and keep you on track for “paying on time”</p> </div> <div> <p>Retirement Planning – protecting your money and never running out</p>  </div> <div>  <p>Long-Term Care – fastest growing need of people over 50</p> </div>
Instructor:	Jarad Gray, Primerica, SEC & FINRA registered

Quote from a participant:

“In our Financial Wellness Workshop, we got a lot of great ideas that everyone should be doing but nobody teaches us. Eric helped lay it out in a way that we could see exactly what was important for us to do right now and what to focus on down the road.” Nichole

Registration

Name _____ Agency _____

Email _____ Address _____

Mail registration to:	Houston Federal Executive Board 2320 La Branch St., Rm 1107 Houston, TX 77004
Email to:	Gerald.Poole@gsa.gov

Cancellation Policy: Understanding that unforeseen circumstances may preclude an individual from attending, cancellations will be permitted through October 28, 2016. Since this is a “no-cost” training, we ask your courtesy to cancel early so that we can accommodate people on the waiting list, if one exists.